Year	Rs. (Crores)
1995-96 (Revised Estimates)	424.62
1994-95	351.81
1993-94	207.09

Postal Operations are largely manpower oriented and approximately 82% of the Total Expenditure of the Department of Post is on salary and wages of the employees. Moreover, the tariff fixed for most of the services, as also agency fee for agency functions, are mostly far less than the cost of operation of these services and this results in low realisation of revenue from these services. It is also relevant to mention that the Department's policy of extending postal facilities in the rural area through opening of new Post Offices includes a substantial element of subsidy.

Steady rise in the cos' anpower and other inputs for Postal Services and non-revision or insufficient revision of rates of many of the services for a number of years contribute to the deficit of the Department.

Revision of Postal Tariff is a part of the Annual Budgetary Exercise, which is done keeping in view the cost of operation and other relevant factors. Efforts are also continuously made by the Government to restrict the department's expenditure through various measures for economy including optimal use of resources and simplification of procedures.

In the Budget speech in Parliament in July, 1996, the Hon'ble Finance Minister has proposed an increase in the rates of printed Post Card from 60 paise to Re. 1/-, registration fee from Rs. 6/- to Rs. 8/-, and introduction of a new service, called Competition Post Card with the tariff of Rs. 2/- each. The Competition Post Card is to be used for responding to any competition organised on or through television, radio, newspaper, magazine or any other media. The additional revenue realisation on account of the proposed revision of tariff is expected to be Rs. 76.00 Crores in a full financial year.

[Translation]

Linkage of Buddhist Tourist places by Air Services

*572. KUMARI UMA BHARATI : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether India and Nepal have decided to formulate a scheme to link their Buddhist tourist places by air services; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

[English]

Shortage of Essential Commodities

*573. SHRI ANAND RATNA MAURYA : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been an acute shortage of essential commodities in the rural and backward areas of various States during the last one year or so;

(b) if so, the details of the essential commodities supplied to each State, item-wise; and

(c) the per quintal subsidy given by the Government on foodgrains in the backward and tribal areas of the country, commodity-wise ?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) No, Sir, Presently, 1775 blocks in the country have been covered under the Revamped Public Distribution System (RPDS). The offtake of foodgrains in the RPDS areas went up from 3.9 million tonnes in 1994-95 to 4.3 million tonnes in 1995-96.

(b) *I. Wheat and Rice*

Only sporadic shortages of wheat and rice in a few isolated pockets for short period were reported due to lack of adequate infrastructure, dislocation due to natural calamities, problems of law and order and movement constraints. Such occasional shortages were tackled by resorting to intra-state and inter-depot movement on priority basis. A statement-I showing statewise offtake of wheat and rice for Revamped Public Distribution System (RPDS) during 1995-96 is enclosed.

II. Sugar

With a record production of 163.11 lakh tonnes (upto 15.8.1996) during 1995-96 sugar season, the overall availability of sugar in the market has improved. The levy sugar quota to all States/UTs p.m. works out to about 3.69 lakh tonnes. In addition, the Government also releases about 1 lakh tonnes of sugar p.a. as festival quota to various States/UTs in the month of their choice. The festival quota has been doubled for the calender year 1996, keeping in view the comfortable level of sugar production during the season 1995-96. A Statement-II showing the statewise monthly quota of levy sugar is enclosed.

III. Edible Oil

No report of any shortage of edible oil has been received from anywhere during the last one year. A

statement-III showing allocation and lifting of edible oil during 1995-96 is enclosed.

IV. Kerosene

Kerosene is allotted to the States/UTs on historical basis i.e. on the basis of the past supplies. On account of constraints of product availability foreign exchange and heavy subsidy involved it has not been possible to meet the full demand of the States. Nevertheless, 3% increase was given in the allocation of kerosene for the country as a whole during 1993-94, 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97 over the previous years, wherein more additional quantity was allotted to the States/UTs having less per capita consumption and vice versa.

V. Soft Coke

The supply of soft coke to various States is stagnant for the last few years due to declining trend of production. In order to meet the requirements of domestic fuel by various States, CILCOKE has also been allocated.

(c) Per quintal subsidy involved in the issue of wheat and rice to States/UTs from the Central Pool for RPDS areas is estimated as under :—

(Rates : Rs/per quintal)

Year	Wheat	Rice
1995-96 (RE)	211.6	187.2

STATEMENT—I

OFFTAKE OF WHEAT AND RICE UNDER REVAMPED PDS DURING 1995-96 (P)

(In '000 Tonnes)

Sl. No.	State/UTs	1995-96		
		Rice	Wheat	Total
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	567.00	13.70	580.70
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	90.60	5.40	96.00
3.	Assam	56.80	1.30	58.10
4.	Bihar	14.60	94.50	109.10
5.	Gujarat	128.20	211.80	340.00
6.	Himachal Pradesh	2.70	8.00	10.70
7.	Jammu & Kashmir	0.00	0.00	0.00
8.	Karnataka	418.80	99.40	518.20
9.	Kerala	171.00	53.20	224.20
10.	Madhya Pradesh	142.10	91.50	233.60
11.	Maharashtra	139.40	251.70	391.10
12.	Manipur	28.80	2.40	31.20
13.	Meghalaya	163.20	27.70	190.90
14.	Mizoram	93.70	23.30	117.00
15.	Nagaland	70.70	19.90	90.60
16.	Orissa	309.90	42.50	352.40
17.	Rajasthan	6.50	423.00	429.50
18.	Sikkim	30.00	7.40	38.00
19.	Tamil Nadu	1.00	0.00	1.00
20.	Tripura	59.50	0.00	59.50

1	2	3	4	5
21.	Uttar Pradesh	64.30	90.90	155.20
22.	West Bengal	111.50	95.20	206.70
23.	A&N Islands	0.00	0.00	0.00
24.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	1.10	0.70	1.80
25.	Daman & Diu	0.70	0.20	0.90
26.	Lakshadweep	0.00	0.00	0.00
27.	Haryana	4.80	56.40	61.20
	Total	2677.50	1620.10	4297.60

(P) = Provisional.

STATEMENT—II

STATEMENT SHOWING THE STATE-WISE MONTHLY QUOTA OF LEVY SUGAR AND FESTIVAL QUOTA

(In M.T.)

S.No.	States/Union Territories	Monthly normal quota w.e.f. 1.2.87***	Revised monthly quota w.e.f. Jan. '96 (on the basis of 1991 Census)	Annual festival quota	Enhanced Festival quota for the year 1996
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Andhra Pradesh	25281	28267	7614	15228
2.	Andaman Nicobar	247	282	74	148
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	314	366	94	188
4.	Assam	9617	9524	2896	5792
5.	Bihar	33459	36707	10078	20156
6.	Chandigarh	372	391	112	224
7.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	51	60	14	28
8.	Delhi	9921*	11973	2316	4632
9.	Goa	500	508	150	300
10.	Daman	24	26	12	24
11.	Diu	10	17		
12.	Gujarat	16194	17557	4878	9756
13.	Haryana	6386	6996	1924	3848

1	2	3	4	5	6
14.	Himachal Pradesh	2019	2197	608	1216
15.	Jammu & Kashmir	3136**	3567	868	1736
16.	Karnataka	17769	19117	5350	10700
17.	Kerala	11953	12368	3600	7200
18.	Lakshadweep	71	81	22	44
19.	Madhya Pradesh	25031	28127	7536	15072
20.	Maharashtra	29938	33550	9014	18028
21.	Manipur	694	782	208	416
22.	Meghalaya	662	752	200	400
23.	Mizoram	261	293	78	156
24.	Nagaland	426	542	128	256
25.	Orissa	12393	13456	3730	7460
26.	Pondicherry	305	360	64	128
27.	Karaikal	73	86	18	36
28.	Mahe	15	18	4	8
29.	Yanam	7	8	2	4
30.	Punjab	7945	8619	2392	4784
31.	Rajasthan	16914	18704	5092	10184
32.	Sikkim	165	174	50	100
33.	Tamil Nadu	22547	23741	6790	13580
34.	Tripura	1001	1173	302	604
35.	Uttar Pradesh	52926	59122	15936	31872
36.	West Bengal	25888	28934	7796	15592
37.	Bhutan	300	315	50	—
	Grand Total	334820	368760	100000	199900

* w.e.f. July, 1993

** w.e.f. Feb., 1994

*** Over and above, 5% ad-hoc increase allowed from August, 1991 to March, 1994, withdrawn in April 1994 & again restored in September, 1995 and continued upto 31.12.1995.

STATEMENT—III

STATEWISE DETAILED ALLOCATION & LIFTING OF EDIBLE OIL (TOTAL) DURING 1995-96

State/UT	Total	
	A	L
Andhra Pradesh	66600	39801
Arunachal Pradesh		
Assam	1200	670
Bihar	200	
Goa	4000	3125
Gujarat	49000	46091
Haryana	200	264
Himachal Pradesh	1503	1188
Jammu & Kashmir	700	390
Karnataka	11000	6622
Kerala		203
Madhya Pradesh	2500	
Maharashtra	30000	15130
Manipur	900	307
Meghalaya	200	10
Mizoram	1300	398
Nagaland	4100	3000
Orissa	12000	35041
Punjab		
Rajasthan	400	
Sikkim	840	629
Tamil Nadu	8000	5089
Tripura	700	
Uttar Pradesh		
West Bengal	17000	14903
Andaman & Nicobar	150	50
Chandigarh	100	
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	640	423
Daman & Diu	875	460
Delhi	3300	2651
Lakshadweep	290	250
Pondicherry	4308	3057
Total	222006	148255

Enhancement in Mineral Production

*574. SHRI N. DENNIS :
SHRI BRAJ MOHAN RAM :

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state

(a) the production of minerals during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(b) whether this production is sufficient to meet the demand of the country ;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to enhance the production of minerals ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) The production of minerals during each of the last three years state-wise is given in statement attached.

(b) and (c) India is by and large sufficient in about 30 minerals including barytes, bauxite, chromite, dolomite, fire-clay, gypsum, iron-ore, illmenite, magnesite, manganese-ore, etc. The country is deficient in important minerals like, rock-phosphate, sulphur, kyanite, cooper, gold, diamonds, nickel, cobalt, lead etc. The gap between demand and domestic availability of the minerals is met through imports as per the extant Export Import Policy.

(d) To encourage investments and increase the production of minerals, the Government announced new National Mineral Policy in 1993 which stipulates inter alia higher investment by the private sector including foreign investment, dereservation of 13 minerals hitherto reserved for exploitation by the public sector only and the induction of state-of-the-art technology for exploration/exploitation of the mnerals. Further 15 minerals have been delisted from the Schedule-I of the Mines and Minerals (Regulation & Development) Act, 1957 for which now the Prospecting Licence/Mining Lease can be granted by the State Governments themselves. Also the Rules framed under MM (R&D) Act, 1957 have been simplified.